

# Caruana makes winning start, Sasi, Negi lose

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**June 22:** The inaugural Airports Authority of India Grandmaster chess tournament got off to a rousing start, as all three games ended in results at the AAI Officer's Institute on Wednesday.

The young and energetic field, with an average age of just over 20 years but 2662 in Elo Ratings, produced some exciting games.

India, though, was in for some disappointment with both Krishnan Sasikiran and Parimarjan Negi losing their games. Sasi (white) lost to Wesley So in 38 moves

before the time control while Negi went down to top seed and world junior No. 1, Fabiano Caruana in 47 moves.

In the third, game Viktor Laznicka (Cze) with black pieces got the better of Hou Yifan (China) in a Caro-Kann Classical. After more than six hours, Laznicka won in 65 moves in a tough battle. Laznicka said he could have win much earlier when he was two pawns up but he missed many winning lines.

Late on Tuesday, Vaylar Ravi, minister for civil aviation, drew the lots for players.

Wesley So, the young Fil-



**Women's world champion Hou Yifan of China (left) and Czech national champion Viktor Laznicka (right) with AAI GM chess tournament officials in New Delhi on Wednesday.**

ipino scored a fine win over Sasi just before the first time control, as the Indian, facing a clear loss, allowed the flag to fall as he had three more moves to make with three second left on his clock.

Negi lost his way in the late stages of the middle game against top-seed Caruana. In fact, there was a time when Negi seemed better off as he was an exchange (rook for a minor piece) up. But the more experienced Caruana held out well and used his double bishops against Negi's double Knights.

**Draw for second round:** Fabiano Caruana (Ita) v Krishnan Sasikiran (Ind); Viktor Laznicka (Cze) v Wesley So (Phi); and Parimarjan Negi (Ind) v Hou Yifan (Chn)